



Radio Operator Training Manual

October 18-27, 2002

Introduction

Here's the basic information on operating the radio room at the Red Cross First Aid Station at the State Fair.

Our primary job is communicating with First Aid Teams who are roving or responding to calls on the fairgrounds. We also answer the phone, and communicate with EMS (ambulances), the Ride Inspectors, the Fair Police and the Highway Patrol. Details are in the following pages.

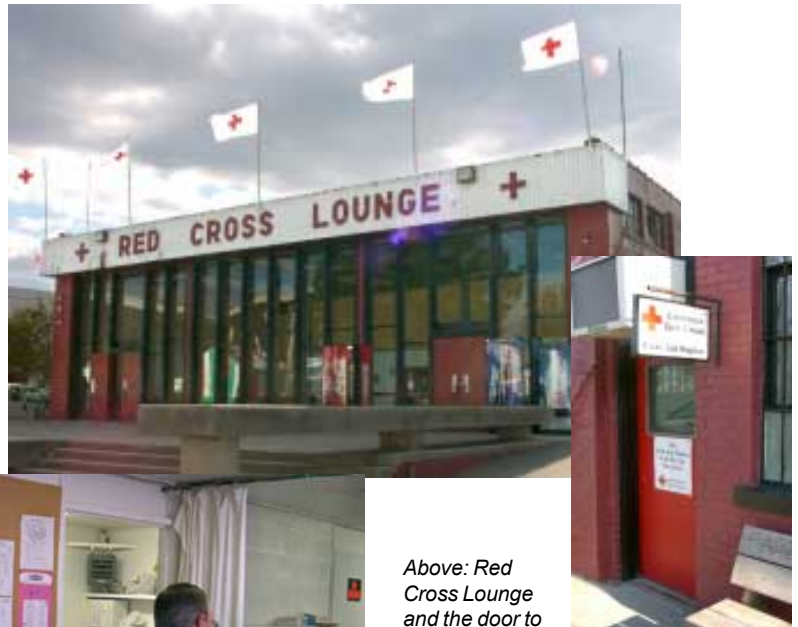
The First Aid Teams, and our radio operation, are based at the First Aid Station, which is located in the building most people know as the Red Cross Lounge. The entrance to the First Aid Station is along the side of the building, and the radio room is right in the middle of the First Aid Station.

The Red Cross also operates a satellite First Aid Station (we call it "Station B"), located near Gate 11 on the eastern end of the Fairgrounds.

Radio operators work only from the radio room at the main First Aid Station - we don't shadow the teams on the Fairgrounds or Station B. The First Aiders operate their own radios in the field.

We operate the entire time the Fair is open (10 days) in three shifts: 9-2, 2-7, and 7-midnight, with two operators per shift.

The person in charge of all activity at the First Aid Station is the **Station Supervisor**.



Above: Red Cross Lounge and the door to the First Aid Station. Left: the radio room is through the door. Below: Station B, at the east end of the fair near Gate 11.



THANKS!!

Equipment and Operations

The radio operators use several radios, an intercom, and the telephone. Our primary radio is a Maxon UHF handheld. There are 10 of these radios, operating on a UHF simplex channel (467.4125 MHz, with a 141.3 Hz PL tone). These are 4 - channel radios, with our simplex channel programmed into all 4 channels, so it doesn't matter which channel it's set to.

Each radio has a speaker-mic, which plugs into the side. Push the plug in *firmly!* Some of them seem to go in easily, but the connector is loose and will work its way out in the field.

The First Aid Teams carry one of these radios whenever they go on to the fairgrounds, either roving or responding to a call. When they ask for a radio, get their Team Number and log the radio out in the logbook.

Our base radio is connected to an outside antenna on the roof of the building. We should get strong signals from all areas of the fair.

By the way, our identification is **Red Cross Base**. The First Aid Teams are identified by number - **Team 1**, **Team 2**, etc. During shows in Dorton Arena, First Aid Teams will be assigned there, with the identification **Arena North** and **Arena South**. If the Supervisor leaves the station, he or she will check out a radio (you log it), and will be identified as **Station Supervisor**.

The second radio we use is the **Ride Inspector** radio, another handheld. There will be one or two ride inspectors on duty any time the fair is open. If someone has been injured on a ride, the Station Supervisor will probably tell you to call the Ride Inspector, and have him come to the



First Aid Station or to the ride. But don't automatically call the Ride Inspector - wait to receive instructions from the Station Supervisor.

You will hear the Ride Inspectors talk to each other from time to time, and on rare occasions they may call you. Don't turn the volume down too low on this radio and miss a call. The Ride Inspector radio can just sit in its charger until you need it.

The third radio is the **EMS** (Emergency Medical Service) radio, used for calling the EMS supervisor, or sometimes calling an ambulance directly. There's no picture for that radio, because it was not available at "press" time. But it will be another handheld that will sit in a charger most of the time. If a patient is going to be taken off the fairgrounds by ambulance, the Station Supervisor may have you call the EMS Supervisor or an ambulance to notify them. An ambulance may call you and ask for traffic control. This radio is not on a primary EMS channel, and should remain fairly quiet. But if there is traffic, don't turn this radio so low you'll miss a call.

Finally, we *may* have a **Nextel phone** with the Nextel "Direct-Connect" 2-way radio function you've probably heard advertised. We had one last year, but at "press time" we did not know if they are available. If they are available, these instructions should help you operate them.

If you think your HT is complex, check out this baby. The instruction manual is 140 pages long. The only function we will use is Direct Connect mode.

This phone has only two uses. The first is to talk to **Kathy Ellen**. Kathy is in charge of the Triangle Red Cross chapter, and the ultimate authority for the First Aid Station. The



Ride Inspector Radio



Kathy Ellen

Making a Call - Backwards!

The procedure for making a radio call is backwards from the usual ham procedure. Usually, we say the callsign of the station we want, followed by our callsign. Here, it's the opposite.

If you wanted to call a team, you would say:
"Red Cross Base calling Team 3."

And remember how noisy it is around the fairgrounds. You may need to make your call several times to be heard. All members of a team may also be busy if they're on a call. Be patient, but persistent, if that's not too much of a contradiction.

Equipment, continued

Station Supervisor has the authority to make just about any decision that comes up, but if Kathy is needed, she should always be on the other end of the Nextel phone.

The second use is to talk to Station B. The first-aiders at Station B will have Maxon walkie-talkies, but if you need to pass some private information, like a patient's name, use the Nextel.

To use the Nextel, first, make sure it's in the right mode, indicated by the **Prvt Ready** in the display. If it's in a wrong mode (see pictures below), press the **Mode** button until you see **Prvt Ready**.

Next, select who you want to talk to, either Kathy or Station B, by pressing the **Left** **Right** keys until you see the display read KATHY or B, as shows in the pictures below.

Once you have the right selection, just press the push-to-talk button on the left side, wait for the beep, and talk.

The phone will receive Direct Connect calls from either Kathy or Station B whether it's in the right mode or not (and you can reply to those calls without worrying about the mode), but you need to set it correctly to initiate a call.



Nextel radio/cell phone



CORRECT Nextel Modes



WRONG Nextel Modes

The **State Fair Police** office is right above us, on the second floor of the Red Cross Lounge building. To talk to them, we use an intercom. At "press time" for this guide, Bob K1RCB just finished installing a new, wireless intercom to talk to the Fair Police and the lounge area. We don't have a picture or instructions for that intercom, but a note is posted on the intercom.

If someone has been injured on the fairgrounds, the Station Supervisor will usually have you call the State Fair Police and have an officer come to the station. Use the intercom as if it were a radio, and say "Red Cross Base to Fair Police." When they answer, give them the message. But don't call them until the Station Supervisor asks you to. We pretty much don't turn any calls around from one agency to another - we always pass the information to the

supervisor, and act on his or her instructions.

The last piece of communications equipment is the **telephone**. There are two "inside" lines, and two "outside" lines, shared among all the phones in the First Aid Station.

We answer all incoming calls on all lines by saying "**Red Cross First Aid Station**". We will get emergency calls, calls for people in the station, and wrong numbers. The main "wrong number" we will get is calls for people to be paged. Sometimes the Fair operators misdirect a paging call to us, and sometimes people ask for "Red Cross" when they want paging, because the paging comes from the Red Cross Lounge. Tell them to call back and ask for "paging." If they are on one of the Fair's "internal" phones, you can give them the paging number from your phone list.



Typical Communications

Let's go through a "typical" call to see how this all gets put together.

Most of the time, it will be quiet. One or two First Aid teams pick up a radio from you (*log the team and radio number*), and will head out roving the grounds. Another team may be standing by at the First Aid Station, or at Station B. Roving teams should check in with you about every 15 minutes, reporting their location. *Log the call, time and location.*

A call comes in on the phone from someone on the fairgrounds. A fairgoer is suffering chest pains. You need to **get a good location** - a fair building, gate or prominent ride or concession nearby. And be careful of someone telling you they're "near the Ferris Wheel" - there are several of those. Next, if possible, **get the name and phone number of the caller**. Then **get a good description of the problem**. "An elderly white male is suffering chest pains." Make notes of everything on a note pad.

If the caller can wait, put them on hold and give the information to the Station Supervisor. If the supervisor does not want additional information, go back to the phone and thank the caller. But, the supervisor may want to talk to them. Sometimes it's just another fairgoer calling, but more often it's someone more "official" - a police officer, fair employee, ride operator, etc. Meanwhile, **log the information in the radio log.**

continued next page

Typical Communications, continued

The supervisor will decide which First Aid Team to send. If it's a roving team, the supervisor will tell you which team to call. He or she may give you specific instructions to pass on to the team, or you might just be repeating the information you received over the phone. When you call the team, **log the call**. Just about every "official" piece of information that passes through you goes into the log.

When the team arrives on the scene, they will report to you, and (you guessed it), you log the time. They will assess the situation and decide on treatment, and sooner or later they will report their analysis to you. Log it, and relay it to the Station Supervisor, if the supervisor isn't already hovering over the radio.

The team may treat the patient on the spot, or they may decide to transport the patient back to the First Aid Station. If the decision is to transport, they'll call to ask for a golf cart with stretcher.

Don't act on your own to dispatch a team with a cart. Just notify the supervisor of the request, and he or she will take care of it. If a team is sent with a cart, they will check in as they leave the station, as they arrive on the scene, as they leave the scene, and as they arrive back at the First Aid Station. You're still logging everything.

This particular patient is going to be transported to the hospital by ambulance. The Station Supervisor will ask you to call the EMS Supervisor, and notify her that a patient is coming for transport. You'll do that using the EMS radio.

And the Station Supervisor will ask you to call one of the Gates (usually Gate 4) to notify them that an ambulance will be coming through. You have a list of fair phone numbers, including the gates. Use one of the "inside" lines to dial the gate.

Finally, you may be asked to call the Highway Patrol and inform them that an ambulance will be leaving the grounds. The HP number is also listed. If you make that call, you'll need to tell them which hospital the ambulance is going to, so the HP can clear the appropriate route. Find out from the EMS Supervisor. Yes, log all these calls. We burn a lot of log paper here. For the past few years, the EMS supervisor has been notifying the Highway Patrol directly, but you should be ready to do it if asked.

RIDE INJURIES

If someone has been injured on a ride, the Station Supervisor will probably have you make a few more calls. The first one will be to the **Ride Inspector**, using the Ride

Inspector radio. The next will be to the **State Fair Police**, using the intercom, and finally to the Amusements of America Office at the Fair, using the telephone. But don't make any calls unless the Station Supervisor directs it.

That's about it - a typical event. The average shift sees between zero and one event like that, although the weekend and evening shifts are more likely to see a lot of action.

Mass Casualties

In extremely rare circumstances, many people may be injured at one time (a serious ride accident, for example). By "many", we mean more than five or six, up to dozens. Too many people for the First Aid teams to handle at once. In those situations, **EMS will take over**, and the First Aid Teams will leave the scene and resume normal duties. Of course,

they will notify you by radio when they leave the scene. Our responsibility for the mass casualty situation will be over. EMS may request assistance from a Red Cross First Aid Team, and the Team will stay, under the direction of EMS. You probably will not get status reports until they are finished and released by EMS. But be prepared to handle any communication that comes your way, either on the Red Cross radio or the EMS radio. You still may be calling Gates or the Highway Patrol... and you still need to clear the activity with the Station Supervisor.



First Aid Team transports patient

10-Codes

This year, we will be using four "10-Code" signals. They are:

- 10-4: OK**
- 10-8: In service, ready for a call**
- 10-9: Repeat**
- 10-22: Unable to locate patient**

If a First Aid Team uses any other 10-Code, ask them to repeat their transmission using plain English.

This & That...

Here are a bunch of miscellaneous pieces of information you need:

Dress Code: just be neat and comfortable. The radio room may be warm or cool, so bring layers.

Name Tags: wear a ham radio callsign badge, or the Red Cross tag if you asked for one.

News Media: don't release any information. Pass all inquires on the to the Station Supervisor.

Breaks/Food: if things are quiet, one radio operator at a time can take a break and go out on the grounds for a few minutes. Go to one of the nearby vendors, not halfway across the fairgrounds. Do **NOT** take a Red Cross radio. You may bring food back to the radio room. Just don't make a mess! You are also welcome to get drinks and snacks from the Break Room in the First Aid Station.

Ham Radios/Scanners: don't monitor or talk on your HT or scanner in the radio room. Your attention should be on the job, and a ham conversation or scanner traffic can be too distracting. Leave your ham radio or scanner on the shelf.

Arrive Early: traffic around the Fair is often very congested, and parking is difficult. Plan to arrive for your shift in time to park and walk in, and still get to the First Aid Station about 15 minutes before your shift begins. If you're on the first shift, you should enter at Gate 4, on Youth Center Dr.

Food Vendors: Do not ask for free food! Some vendors may offer Red Cross volunteers free food, but don't ask for it!

Sexual Harrassment: The Red Cross is very sensitive to sexual harrassment. Anybody causing a problem will be asked to leave, which causes a problem for me... so please don't do it, because I already have enough problems!

Parking/Gate Access

The Red Cross does not have any parking spaces available inside the fairgrounds. There are free parking lots at the Vet School, east of Blue Ridge Road, and at the Horse Complex, at Youth Center and Trinity. There is a Fair Worker's parking lot across Hillsboro St. If you tell the attendant you're working with the Red Cross, you may be able to park there. And there is usually parking available along Powell Dr, between Western and Hillsboro.

The Red Cross does have a small parking area available on Grand St, on the lawn of the first house north of Hillsboro, behind the Barber Shop. You'll need a parking

pass to use that lawn, which you should have received at orientation. This space is for a maximum of 10 cars. If you see 10 cars already there, park elsewhere. And don't tie up that area outside your shift hours.

The easiest way in and out of the Fair area is on Western Blvd, and up Powell St. Western is usually not congested. You can turn up Powell, and turn east on Hillsboro St. to drop someone off or reach the Fair Worker parking lot.

To get into the grounds: Gate 3 is closed! Gate 4 is supposed to be a vehicle gate ONLY, but the workers there will let Red Cross workers walk in and out. BUT - you can't get your hand stamped there for re-entry later. If you want a hand stamp, enter at one of the other gates.

